



Highlights from the Alternative In-House Technology Summit 3-4 February 2020

One conference I never miss is Alternative Event's legal technology conference, held every February since 2017 and now in its fourth consecutive successful year.

This year the content can, I think, be split into three distinct themes, and we plan to publish one article each week following each of these themes:

1. How to develop a **culture** for change and innovation.
2. **Lawyers and change.**
3. How to **embed** change and innovation successfully.

Theme 1: How to develop a culture for change and innovation

Part 1 of this series of articles can largely be credited to Luke Battye of Sprint Valley www.sprintvalley.com, who gave a very energetic and illuminating presentation on how companies can develop a culture for change and innovation. It was very different to the content we are all so familiar with from various legal conferences – more akin to what you might read about in a HBR article. But then, Steve and SK do like to keep the audience on their toes at their conferences – one of the reasons this event has been a 'must do' in my calendar since its first year.

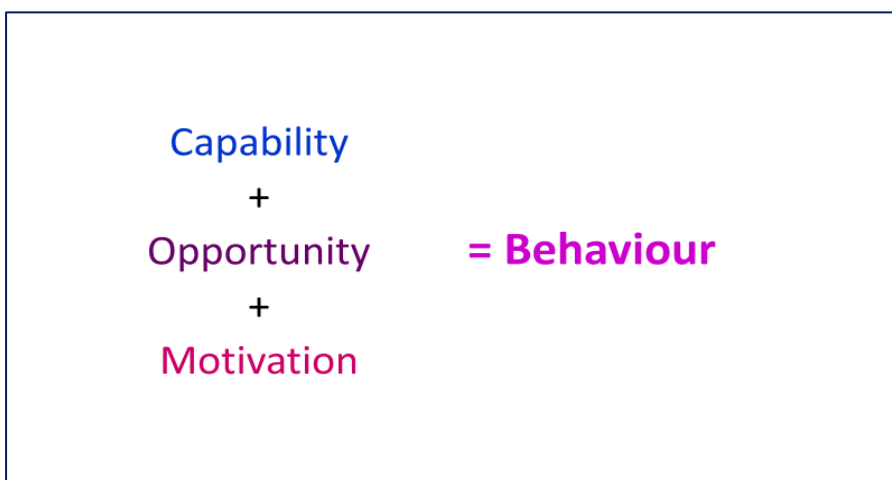
The title of Luke's talk was '**Behavioural science masterclass: Developing and embedding a culture of innovation**'. Highlights from his presentation, for me, follow. I have thrown in a few relevant

points made by other panelists and speakers during the conference about the topic of culture, together with my own thoughts – but it is safe to say that Luke held the floor on this topic.

- Technology changes quickly. People don't.
- There is a science for behavioural change. You have to start with behaviour.
- You need to change behaviour to drive a change in culture.



- Context drives behaviour: the context, or environment, or an organisation is the main driver of employee behaviour.
- Think about your organisation's maturity level. If it is 3 years old, or 950 years old, its attitude to change and innovation will be different. Its culture may be deeply embedded – or not.
- Strategic goals can be seen as behavioural challenges. What makes up behaviour?
- **Capability + opportunity + motivation = behaviour.**



- You need **CAPABILITY**. Your people need the right skills.
- What core behaviours make people successful at innovation? There are four types of people:
 - *Generator* – get things started and find new challenges.
 - *Conceptualiser* – frame problems and put things together.

- *Optimiser* – turn abstract ideas into practical plans (but they need more than a blank piece of paper to get started).
- *Implementer* – align teams and get things done.
- Teams need a balance of all these people. Some people will display more than one behaviour.
- Example: a company afraid of falling behind needs generators and conceptualisers.
- Equally, you can have loads of great ideas but that's no good if you can't get things done.
- Companies need a constant throughput of innovation.
- A lack of optimisers can be frustrating as you may have to rely on others to turn your ideas into practical plans.
- Everyone needs **OPPORTUNITY** – the opportunity to take part, no matter what their skillset.



- There are three parts to opportunity:
 - *Resources* – Do you make resources available? Do people have the time to take part? Example: does your company, by habit, always schedule 60 minute meetings when it could move to 30 minute meetings to free up people's time? You may not need to hire; you may just need to free up time.
 - *Technology and tools* – Do you make it easy to contribute? Are you enabling a remote team to take part in collaborative projects/problem-solving? You could investigate open innovation platforms as a method for encouraging people to submit ideas and view others' ideas.
 - *Permission* - Do you endorse and support participation? Human beings will usually conform to group thinking. Are you really supporting people to come up with fresh ideas and truly participate? At all levels?
- **MOTIVATION.** There are three parts to motivation:
 - *Intent* - What does your innovation strategy look like? What are you trying to achieve? What role is innovation playing in your overall strategy? Innovation is a tool to achieve something, an output. What outcome do you want? Examples: Are you protecting your core business – so looking at supply chain, process and

efficiency? Are you intending to grow your core business – so looking at new services? Are you looking at new markets – so looking at new audiences and new products?

- *Feedback* – Are you on track? What does your ‘innovation funnel’ look like? Example: you may start with 160 people contributing ideas. 40 of the ideas generated might turn into qualified opportunities. Maybe four of those will be piloted. There could be one success. So ... 160 to 40 to 4 to 1.
 - *Recognition* - Real reward is being recognised for solving the problem. What behaviours do you incentivise and how? As a general rule of thumb, collaboration will beat competition every time.
- What needs to change in your company to promote successful innovation?
 - Do you intend to really challenge your team to collaborate more?
 - Do people need to be told that if they are weak on e.g. optimising, they should get help from someone who’s good at that.
 - Do they need to be told that not being able to do it all is not regarded as failure.



As I was listening to Luke’s brilliant talk, I was reminded of some words I heard during a lecture about adaptive leadership. As we know, culture will not change without effective leadership. Leaders can choose to exercise leadership. They can choose whether to show (act) or whether to tell. The best way to change people’s behaviour is, arguably, to start with your own, as this is what your people are thinking: “I hear what you say, but I see what you *do*, and *seeing is believing*.”

Leaders need to give their people the **capability**, the **opportunity** and the **motivation** to change their behaviour and help deliver strategic success.